

**Missouri Race to the Top
Executive Summary
January 19, 2010**

The Race to the Top Fund provides competitive grants to encourage and reward states that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform in four specific areas: (1) Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; (2) Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction; (3) Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and (4) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools.

The following highlights provide an overview of Missouri's Race to the Top application, submitted yesterday afternoon. The total budget for the application is \$743,451,964, with \$354,325,000 going directly to participating school districts and public charter schools. The entire application can be accessed on the Department website later this week at www.dese.mo.gov/rt3.

With or without this grant, the Department intends to use the Race to the Top application as a framework for redesigning the Department itself and for driving educational reform over the next decade. The plan will serve as the catalyst to propel Missouri's public education system into the Top 10, nationally and internationally.

Curriculum and Assessment

- Adopt and implement the NGA/CCSSO Common Core Standards for mathematics, reading, speaking, listening, and writing and position the state to adopt forthcoming common standards in other content areas and across the P-20 spectrum.
- Fully participate in assessment consortia developing formative, interim/benchmark, and summative assessments of the NGA/CCSSO Common Core Standards for mathematics, reading, speaking, listening, and writing and collaborate with other states to develop assessments in other content areas and across the P-20 spectrum.
- Develop a model curriculum framework consisting of course descriptions, unit outlines, measurable objectives, interim/benchmark assessments and scoring guides, suggested evidence-based instructional strategies, instructional timelines, and a state online instructional support environment tied to the Common Core K-12 Standards and all other content areas in the P-12 spectrum.
- Design and disseminate grade/subject specific professional development to support the implementation of the model curriculum for all content areas and for all educators from early childhood through higher education.

- Align high school graduation requirements with work-ready standards and college-ready standards and expand opportunities for high school students to pursue STEM careers.

Data Systems

- Provide required 21st century technology infrastructure and bandwidth to all school districts throughout the State of Missouri by implementing MoBroadbandNow. <http://transform.mo.gov/broadband/wiki/index.php/MoBroadbandNow>
- Direct the implementation of and manage the *Missouri Comprehensive Data System* containing P-20 longitudinal data from multiple sources and state agencies for use by all stakeholders for instructional, research and planning purposes.
- Develop a system to link classroom observations to a web-based teacher quality system so that observers and teachers can work collaboratively to capture and identify effective teaching practices based on student performance and leadership activities.
- Develop and implement a system to certify Data Teams of teachers and leaders qualified to analyze and use student performance data in driving instructional improvement in every district by June 2011, and in every school by June 2012.

Teachers and Leaders

- Work with key stakeholder groups to develop model educator performance assessment systems at the state level. Require LEAs to implement these models or develop – in collaboration with local teachers and leaders and in concert with local agreements – an equally rigorous or proven model.
- Develop and implement extensive training modules for the use of performance-based educator assessment systems and monitor the participation of LEAs.
- Develop models and provide assistance to school districts to work collaboratively with teachers, leaders and other stakeholders to develop and implement differentiated recognition and reward systems that include features such as fellowships, expanded roles such as coaching and mentoring, and additional time for development and study.
- Work with school districts and others to develop models that create disproportionately attractive working conditions in high-need or hard-to-staff schools such as higher pay, flexible schedules, or other incentives.
- Develop models and provide assistance to school districts to develop – in collaboration with local teachers and leaders and in concert with local agreements –

plans to provide more students with access to the highest-quality instruction, such as through assignment of students, videotaped lessons, online coursework, new roles for highly-effective teachers, or other means.

- Develop partnerships to provide opportunities for additional alternative route programs that include early classroom practice, mentoring and induction programs, and emphasis on teaching hard to staff subjects (STEM).
- Create statewide or regional (urban, inner ring or rural) school district partnerships with highly-effective local or national alternative certification providers, such as Teach for America.
- In collaboration with key stakeholder groups, create a rating system for teacher preparation programs based on the effectiveness of their graduates as measured by multiple measures of growth in student achievement.
- Provide competitive grants to teacher and leader preparation programs to focus on STEM and other high need areas.
- Restrict funding exclusively to professional development programs that are demonstrably successful in improving teacher effectiveness and student learning, as reflected by measures developed collaboratively by the Department and all stakeholders.
- Develop a system to link classroom observations to a web-based teacher quality system so that observers and teachers can work collaboratively to capture and identify effective teaching practices based on student performance and leadership activities.
- Develop models for and incent school districts to design instructional delivery systems that provide time for common planning and collaboration for teachers and leaders.

Turnaround Schools

- Develop and implement a statewide framework for Quality Schools with three components:
 - turnaround intervention for schools that have already failed and need immediate and definitive action;
 - school improvement support for all schools to address achievement gaps, STEM needs, high school reform or other areas in need of attention; and
 - early learning programs to ensure a strong foundation and early intervention for all children and to prevent the need for turnaround in the future.

- **Reconfigure the Department to develop and implement a statewide, systemic system of support—the Regional Education Services for Leadership and Training (RESLTs) Centers—that ensures quality schools through:**
 - Quick intervention and strong leadership for turnaround efforts in failing schools and LEAs;
 - A tiered system of technical assistance and accountability monitoring to drive school improvement in every classroom, grade, sub-group, school and district;
 - Training and technical assistance to building and district-level teachers and administrators in the use of the Missouri Comprehensive Data System;
 - Individualized professional development and data team training for teachers and leaders;
 - Technical assistance and structure in developing a sound educational foundation for every child through a “braided” system of integrated services to children and families in early learning programs.
- **Quality Schools—Turnaround**
 - Work with all stakeholders and experts to develop a Missouri Turnaround Model, including criteria that will be used by the State Board of Education to identify and turn around the State’s low-performing LEAs, schools, and groups of students. The model will outline specific measures to address human capital, community and climate and cultural components necessary to create conditions needed for turnaround (e.g.: resources, school schedules, additional professional development).
 - Identify and implement turnaround strategies in all failing schools by June 2014.
- **Quality Schools—School Improvement**
 - Use the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) to diagnose problems and to recognize and disseminate effective practices in all schools and districts through monitoring and review. The Department will work with stakeholders to establish early-warning systems to identify students at risk of failing or not graduating, schools at risk of failing, and districts at risk of failing and will direct the design of individualized programs of intervention and support.
 - Services will be provided through the RESLTs Centers to develop and/or implement model programs as necessary to meet identified improvement areas (i.e. dropout prevention, cultural proficiency, STEM, mentoring, etc.).
 - Develop and/or adopt state models based on proven non-traditional recruitment and training models for teachers and leaders. Work with districts to develop—in collaboration with local stakeholders and in concert with local agreements--plans to recruit and retain effective teachers and leaders for chronically low-achieving or hard-to-staff schools.
 - In collaboration with professional organizations, educate local school boards and train principals to effectively use newly developed evaluation systems for teachers and principals (as referenced in Section D).

- **Quality Schools—Early Learning and Prevention**

- **Develop a state model for a “braided,” seamless, community-based system of early education, including education, health and social services, mental health and other critical support for children and families to ensure that every child is ready for success in kindergarten. Provide initial funding to assist school districts in adopting the state model or developing comparable models for such early learning programs.**
- **Introduce legislation and secure funding by 2014 to support voluntary universal early childhood opportunities for all 3- and 4-year-olds.**

Charter Schools

- **Missouri will strengthen the charter school authorizing/sponsorship process towards increased accountability to ensure performance and fiscal integrity by:**
 - **Implementing standards for sponsorship;**
 - **Implementing an evaluation process for sponsors to increase and ensure they are held accountable for their oversight/monitoring;**
 - **Implementing guidelines for sponsors that hold them accountable for closing poor performing charter schools;**
 - **Proposing a change in statute**
 - ✓ **Requiring an actual performance contract between the charter school’s governing board and the sponsor prior to the school opening;**
 - ✓ **Defining the terms/conditions under which a charter school may be placed on probation as opposed to being closed;**
 - ✓ **Permit the State Board to close a charter school, in lieu of the sponsor, for specific cause (academic, financial, etc.).**
- **Offer funding incentives to LEAs to develop and implement independent innovative schools including alternative schools, STEM-related schools or others to meet identified needs.**